

Top 10 Triggers for Over-Eating

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Boredom- You eat when you're bored or do not have anything interesting to do or look forward to. TV is a favorite pass time especially when you are alone at home and bored. When food commercials are running 200 images per hour into our cerebral cortex it is difficult not to be drawn towards the refrigerator. If food commercials are a trigger, watch nature shows or commercial-free TV.

Beat it by: If you are just grabbing anything out of the refrigerator, make something healthy like cut veggies and leave them in the fridge.

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Feeling Deprived- You feel deprived of the foods which you enjoy and this leaves you craving for them even more. Media's attitudes towards emphasizing thinness as ideal has led to restrictive dieting and avoidance of whole groups of foods. Unfortunately, because the foods being avoided are abundantly available, and food visibility and availability are powerful eating stimuli, the restricter often breaks her "plan" and eats a forbidden food. Once this happens, overwhelming guilt followed by feelings of low self esteem motivate the individual to go on over consuming the avoided food in an attempt to numb these negative feelings.

Beat it by: Focusing on balancing the calorie input to calorie output. Model healthy eating and exercise habits. Do this as a genuine concern for your own well-being. Eating high fat foods in moderation will do no harm.

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Feeling Disgust or Hatred with Your Body- Check if your focus is on the things which you feel are wrong with your body. One of the reasons women are unable to overcome eating triggers is the inability to accept the body in spite of the bombardment on our souls of absurd body ideals.

Beat it by: seeking professional advice from a dietician or psychologist who will help you overcome the feeling of disgust and hatred. Map out a recovery plan in close consultation and then try to stick with it to develop a positive self-image. Define your own personal values – those that are right for your individual authentic self. Each of you must discover who you are inside, what your innate talents and gifts are and then find the joy and strength to nurture those gifts to their fullest – regardless of anyone else's opinions.

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Glucose intolerance- This is a physiological trigger. In a healthy body, carbohydrates are converted to glucose and a blood glucose level of ~60-120mg/dl is maintained without thought to the dietary consumption of carbohydrate. In the glucose intolerant population, carbohydrates are readily converted to glucose and the pancreas responds to this shift in blood sugar by secreting an excessive amount of the hormone, insulin. Insulin's job is to remove the glucose from the blood stream and help it to enter the body cells. If done properly, the blood glucose level returns to the normal range regardless of the amount of carbohydrate consumed. If this system is not working correctly, a quick rise in blood glucose followed by an over production of insulin occurs. The excessive insulin is not recognized by the body cells so is unable to remove the glucose from the blood stream. The result is an increase in blood insulin levels, which has an appetite stimulating effect. The person is driven to eat and if simple carbohydrates are chosen, the cycle continues.

Beat it by: Spreading the calories out by eating a small amount frequently can help maintain a normal blood glucose level. This means every ~3 hours. A recommendation is to be slightly hungry before the next eating event. If famished, then the interval between eating events is probably too long or too little was eaten at the last eating event. If one approaches the next eating event full then too much was consumed at the last eating event. The macronutrients, protein and fat, in combination with carbohydrate have the potential to delay the rise in blood glucose. Protein is preferred as fat interferes with the effectiveness of insulin. Complex carbohydrates leave the stomach more slowly than simple carbohydrate and therefore can also help in blood glucose regulation. Complex carbohydrates contain fiber. Soluble fiber is especially beneficial for this condition. If blood glucose levels do not rise rapidly, there is less likelihood of excessive insulin secretion and less appetite stimulation. It's important to increase water consumption along with an increase in protein or fiber. Water carries nutrients and oxygen to cells and removes waste. Eating a high fiber diet requires extra water to process the additional roughage and to prevent constipation.

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Habits- Your daily habits are not as healthy as they may be and you may not even be aware of some of them. Often, excessive eating, lack of physical activity and stress tips the scales of our otherwise balanced lifestyles. Many women have found that overeating tends to occur in specific places and times, such as in the evening when you're at home and watching television.

Beat it by: Turning off the TV off and engaging in a hobby that keeps your mind and hands busy. Another solution to stress-related overeating is to address the sources of stress. Acknowledge and address feelings of depression, anger or anxiety. Do whatever you can to reduce feelings of stress, like writing a journal, talking with a friend, or exercise.

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Lack of Energy and Feeling Tired- You are putting up with so much in your life that this is constantly draining your energy, leaving you feeling tired. "When your energy level is low, you may look for food to pick you up," says Robert E. Thayer, Ph.D., professor of psychology at California State University at Long Beach. Unfortunately, most women reach for calorie-laden treats instead of an apple or banana.

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Beat it by: Identifying your low-energy times of day and substitute them with other activities for eating. Take a 10-minute walk or a water-cooler chat break. There are healthier ways of nurturing yourself, such as getting plenty of rest and relaxation, reading a good book, or taking a quiet walk.

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Needing Love and Comfort- You turn to food when you're really needing love and comfort. With the pressure of work both at office as well, at home women tend to be burned out. All this is acceptable if supported with constant appreciation and love. Lack of appreciation, discouraging remarks leave women sad and lonely, who tend to turn towards food to find consolation.

Beat it by: Taking out some time for yourself and relaxing. Pamper yourself by going out for a facial, manicure or pedicure. Take out the children to a nearby park where you can walk and relax along with the kids.

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Feeling Overwhelmed- You have got so much that you feel you must do that you find it difficult to take the first step. Pressure of work and deadlines leaves many discouraged, who finally drop-out without giving a try. Take the first step, then the second and third and move on...

Beat it by: Do what can be done. Trust me, you will be amazed with your own capacity of performance. Reinforce the feeling of achievements in you instead of submitting to the pressure. Emotional eating is sometimes considered well within the range of normal behavior. However, problems arise when emotional eating becomes excessive and interferes with lifestyle quality and good health. If you feel emotional eating is a problem, it may be wise to work with a counselor trained in eating disorders.

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Feeling Upset and Hurt- You turn to food when someone says or does something that feels upsetting or hurtful to you. Anxieties and emotions can also trigger the desire to eat. Some women eat because they are sad or stressed out or even to celebrate when they are happy.

Beat it by: Going out in the open air and walk. The mini-blast of oxygen will vanquish tiredness and mental exhaustion. Leave your worries behind and be in the moment. Look at the birds. Be thankful. Let go, breathe deeply and relax. You may discover God has always been with you!

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Lack of Willpower- Your attitude is shaped by your thoughts, feelings, and actions. It's really easy to feel good when the going is good. The key to vibrant energy and a powerful attitude is to MAKE yourself feel good, ESPECIALLY when the going's tough, and you don't feel good, or you don't want to feel good. Willpower is one of the tools you need to employ in order resist the powerful cravings associated with food. The cravings will attempt to control you. It is your willpower, determination and self-discipline that you will use to fight back.

Beat it by: developing a strong will-power. Every women has the capacity to build up or strengthen her willpower by exercising it in times of need. Lifting weights develops muscles, and exercising willpower makes it stronger. Add self-discipline in your life to become more aware of how you use your willpower in the course of all your daily activities.

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Constructive identification and learning to cope with emotional and physiological triggers is an important key towards lifelong physical, mental, emotional and social health.

Source: <http://www.womenfitness.net/over-eating.htm>

